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LETTERS OF JOHN RUTLEDGE¹

Annotated by JOSEPH W. BARNWELL

Addressed: The Delegates of S^c. Carolina²
In Congress.

Camden, May 24th, 1780

Gen^t—

I could not obtain a Copy of the Articles of Capitulation of Chas. Town, untill yesterday—Genl. Lincoln did not, it seems,

¹ The originals of these letters of Governor John Rutledge are now in the possession of the Charleston Library Society and are published by their permission. They were presented to the Library by Mr. Thomas Bee, the son of Judge Thomas Bee, one of the delegates from South Carolina in the Continental Congress. They were published in *Russell's Magazine* issued in Charleston from April, 1857, to March, 1860 (vol. 1, p. 534; vol. 2, pp. 81 and 270; vol. 3, pp. 30 and 243), but as this magazine is not upon *Poole's Index*, its contents are little known. They are not cited by, and appear not to have been known to General McCrady. The letters were besides published with numerous errors. They are most creditable to Governor Rutledge and give a picture of the condition of affairs in this state after the fall of Charleston obtainable nowhere else.

² This letter shows that the action of the Continental Congress on June 23, 1780, in unanimously adopting a resolution declaring among other things that "this Confederacy is most solemnly pledged to support the liberty and independence of every one of its members" was only taken after this letter was read to the Congress, and upon the report of a Committee appointed to consider it (*Journal of Continental Congress*, vol. xvii, p. 554).

think it at all material, to inform me of it—b^t I judge it necessary to acquaint you, &, thro' you, Congress, (to whom you will make the proper Representation of it), with the Situation of Affairs, here, at this period, I send, inclosed, a Copy of the Capitulation lest the Flag which the Gen^l, had Liberty to send, with dispatches to Philadelphia, sh'd not have arrived—The terms of the Capitulation are truly mortifying—the Treatment of the Prisoners were so—the Contl. Officers are Prisoners on Parol, at the Barracks on Haddrells-Point & restricted to six miles from them—the Seamen & Soldiers are Prisoners at the Barracks in Town—thus separated, with a design to get 'em to enlist, & enter, into the British Service, which some have done already, & many, with't doubt, will—I hope Congress will effect an Exchange, of these Troops, as soon as possible, (tho', it is probable, that Clinton will endeavour to avoid it), otherwise, in a little Time, they may expect 'em turned ag^t. us.—On Saturday last, the Enemy took Post with a considerable force at Dupree's ferry on Santee River which they began to cross, that day, on their March to George-Town, whither they had sent some Vessells, from C:Town, & they are certainly in possession of Geo:Town, which was not defensible,—Genl.-Casswell, who lay a little below Depree's ferry, with the No. Carolina Brigades, & the Virginia Continentals, under Col. Buford, had luckily retreated this way, before the Enemy got to that ferry, & thereby prevented their Cutting off his Retreat, which was probably their first Scheme—These Troops, now under Command of Genl-Huger, are abt. 15 miles below this place, & will be here today—Huger's Motions will be directed, by the Corresp^g force of the Enemy—Sorry I am to say, his force is altogether inadequate to any offensive Operation—The Enemy, according to advices recd. last Night, were, the Evening before, at Black-mingo—but, whether with Intention to take a Circuit, by way of the hanging Rock Road, in order to get in the Rear of our Troops, or, to proceed for No. Carolina is as yet, uncertain—The next Movem^t. they make will demonstrate which of These Points is there object—Parties are gone to reconnoitre; However I tho't. it adviseable, not to wait for their Return, but to give you the foregoing, & following, intelligence, as soon as possible—We have no certain accounts what the force above mentd. is, or, by whom commanded, but, it is said, & I believe it, to be considerable, & under Lord Cornwallis.

It is evident, that the Conquest of No. as well as of So. Carolina is the Enemy's plan—The Time for which they endeavour to enlist Men is untill these Countries are conquered; & a Junction with the disaffected at Cross-Creek,³ will probably, be attempted by the Body above mentd., who have, with them, a large, Highland Regm't. I have good Reason to believe, that they will send vessells (some perhaps with troops,) to possess the Rivers, & the Towns on them, in No Carolina—& it is probable, that they will establish Magazines of provisions, at Brunswick, & Wilmington, whither they may send great Quantities of Rice from the lower parts of our State—They can hardly, I think, expect to penetrate, far into the back Country of No. Carolina, unless they depend, more than I hope they can wth. good Grounds, on the disaffection of the People there; but, I presume, they will extend their Course, along, & at some distance from, the sea—I hope, indeed, that their Progress will be soon checked, tho', their Numbers are really great, but, surely, Virginia will now be roused, & the forces of that State & of No. Carolina, powerfully supported by Congress, will make the Enemy repent of their Temerity in attempting Conquests more Northwardly—I cannot account for the Backwardness of the Troops ordered hither by Congress, & Virginia & for our Want of Intelligence, respecting 'em—We know not where any of 'em are—I still hope, however that a Combination of force, & better Fortune than our last, will soon oblige the Enemy to tread back their Steps, & tho' I have no Hope of regaining Chas. Town, except by Treaty, that the Country will be preserved, & No. & So. Carolina, & even Georgia, retained, in the Union, for surely, our Brethren & Allies will never give up the Independence of either of these States, or suffer such valuable Territories to be lopped off—whether the Enemy will make any Attempts on our back Country, except by Tories & Indians,⁴ is still uncertain—If they send up a regular force, I am convinced they will be joined by Numbers, & many Men will fall a Sacrifice to the Resentment of our domestick or internal Enemies—But, if regular Troops are not sent up, I think our People will manage the disaffected, & keep 'em

³ Now Fayetteville.

⁴ This statement of the probable effect of the taking of Charleston is almost prophetic, and shows the grasp which Rutledge's mind took of the situation in this state.

from doing any considerable Mischief: However, I expect no other service from the Militia—They are so apprehensive of their Families being killed & their Properties destroyed, (by the Tories & Indians who daily threaten Hostilities,) whilst they are absent, from their districts, that I believe it will be impracticable to keep any Number worth mentioning on duty, with the Army, or at any distance from their own Homes—If I can get 'em to embody, in their own districts, & keep the Country quiet, it is, really, as much as I expect they will do, at present & untill Troops arrive from the Northward—but Even this depends on the Enemy's not sending up regular forces, to take Posts in the back parts of the State, for, if they do the disaffected will certainly flock to them, & those who are not disaffected will either abscond, if they can, or, (which is more probable) be taken Prisoners with't. Arms, in which Case they will expect to be treated, as those are who have been taken under similar circumstances, viz. put on Parole—a piece of Policy which the Enemy have adopted, wth. respect to our Militia, for obvious Reasons—This is a melancnoly, but a faithful Accot. of our Affairs, at this Time—However, we must not despair: I will still hope for great & speedy Succours, from our Brethren, to animate & support our People & for a Reverse of our late bad Fortune—But, immediate, & the greatest Exertions of the Northern States & of Congress are (be assured) indispensable, to prevent the Desolation & Ruin of this State & Georgia, & the Enemy's obtaining, (what they flatter themselves with shortly securing,) the three Southernmost States—too valuable a Prize ever to be given up to them—I request the favour of hearing, fully, from you, as soon as possible, & of knowing what Aid we may expect, from you, & when we may be assured of it—Genl. Gates or some other able & experienced Genl. with the Troops, who come will be absolutely necessary—We have not a Contl. Genl. here but Huger, whose Health will scarcely suffer him to undergo any kind of Fatigue—Colo. Hamilton is exchanged, & I suppose will do much Mischief, amongst his old Friends in No. Carolina—You will order the person by whom you write, to come the upper Road, & to proceed to Camp, wherever it may be—There, He will Either find, or hear of me—I am with great Esteem Gent.—yr. most obedt. Servt.

J. Rutledge.

P.S. Private.

Be pleased to send, to me, as soon as possible a Copy of Lincoln's Letter, to Congress, respecting the Capitulation—I want to know why, after the last reenforcement arrived (of 2500 men) he did not evacuate the Town & save his Troops, wch I think he might Easily have done, with all his Artillery, & Stores, by crossing, in the Frigates, & other Vessells, over to Lempriere's, & coming thro' Christ Church Parish, before the Communication was cut off, which wd. have preserved the Country, or at least, the Army, & probably frustrated the Enemy's plan of Conquering this State, much less of going to No. Carolina—& why, even at the last, & when Cornwallis was posted near Wappetaw, wth. 2500 Men, Lincoln did not end'r. to make good his way, wth. all his Troops, (which he might have done, tho'. with some Loss) rather than agree to so infamous a Capitulation, for the Garrison are in my Opinion, in Effect, prisoners at Discretion—These things appear mysterious to me, but, I will suspend a final Judgmt., on them, till I hear what he says on the Matter.⁵ It is currently reported, & believed, here, that G. Britain will offer America, the Independence of all the States except No. & So. Carolina & Georgia—& perhaps even of No. C.— & that such a proposition will be accepted—I think it impossible, that Congress will leave us in the Lurch—but, pray inform me candidly, & fully what may be expected on that Head—If they never will give up the Independence of any *one* State (which I trust they will not) it wd. be best to declare it immediately in the most pointed Terms, to satisfy the wavering & defeat the Schemes of our Enemies—Such a declaration generally made known with a good Number of Troops, wd. revive the Spirits of many of our credulous & dejected, tho' well meaning, People—

All your Friends who were in Town are well—not a Militia Man killed or hurt, but Peter Lord killed & no officer of the Continentals that I recollect, killed or wounded except Colo. Parker of the Virginians, & Cap. Tho. Moultrie killed—also Phil:Neyle—I left

⁵ Probably no one knew better than General Lincoln that he should have saved a part at least of the garrison of Charleston before the surrender, but he lacked the decision of character to do so.

Mrs. Kinloch & Mrs. Huger well, at Kensington, yesterday Fort-night—

The Delegates of So. Carolina in Congress.

P.S. Be pleased to make known to Major Harleston if with. or near you the Contents of this Letter.

P.S. May 26th: 1780.

Camden

Caswells & Bufords Men are come up hither Each Corps consists of abt. 400 Effective.

Genl. Huger purposes sending Caswells to Haly's Ferry on Pedee in No. Carolina—and Buford's to Charlotte⁶—from thence towards Hillsborough thinking this force too insignificant to resist the Enemy in this State & that they will be of more service in No. Carolina for the present where he apprehends the Enemy will Endeavour to make an Impression.

Our Intelligence from below is that the Enemy had crossed Murray's ferry the day before Yesterday (abt. 85 Miles from hence) on the March hither.

Endorsed. Gov. Rutledge

May 24 & 26th 1780

Camden

Addressed: The Delegates of S^o. Carolina
in Congress.

Hillsborough, Sept. 20, 1780

Gent^t—

A Copy of Colo. Marions Letter to Genl. Gates, & of the Examination of one Allmand, (which are transmitted, by this opportunity, to Congress,) will inform you of our latest Intelligence from So. Carolina—but, I do not believe that part of it which relates to Pickens's having taken part at Ninety-Six—I don't know whether the Genl. has sent to Congress, a Copy of Lord Cornwallis's Letter to Colo. Balfour—I therefore inclose one—his Lordship sent similar Letters to the Officers commanding in the several districts throughout the State—I think it is beyond a Doubt, that,

⁶ The division of these forces was most disastrous. Tarleton fell upon Buford as he was retreating at Waxhaw's Church and practically annihilated his command giving little quarter. Governor Rutledge was himself nearly captured at Rugeley's house by Tarleton's men.

at least, 7 Men, of those who have declared themselves British Subjects & taken up Arms with the Enemy, & who had afterward joined our Party, have been hanged, & that the Houses of sevl. who had left 'em, have been burnt, upon a presumption, I suppose, that they had come over to us—On the 15th Inst., Colo. Sumpter lay, with abt. 200 Men, to the Westwd. of Catawba, Genl. Davidson was with abt. 400 Militia, below Charlotte, & Genl. Sumner, with, (it is said,) abt. 800 more, that day reached Salisbury where he halted, to get Pouches made for his Men, & this is all Our force that I can find to be actually embodied & in the Field, except the little Party under Marion, & a few at Cross Creek, under Colo. Harrington—not a man from Virginia is in this State, except abt. 250 Concls. under Beaufort, & abt. 60 of the Militia, who ran away from the action wth Cornwallis, & who have been lately brot. to Hillsborough, nor can we hear of any being on the March from Virginia—Genl. Gates recd. a Letter, from Govr. Jefferson, dated the 12th Inst. but he does not mention anything of the 18 Months Men who were expected from thence—The 2000 Militia who, it is said, are to come from that State (in Addition to these) I am told will not rendesvous till the 25th. of next Month—I wish an apprehension that Portsmouth will be Clintons object, may not retard the March of the Virginia Forces—Genl. Gates says the Continentals at Hillsborough (who do not exceed 900) cant. march, until they are furnished, with Shoes, Shirts, overalls, & Blankets, & until Magazines are established to the Westward—If so, I fear it will be a very considerable Time before they stir—for, where these Supplies are to come from, or when they will be procured I cant. guess—as yet, not a single Hide is obtained for making Shoes—Genl. Smallwood, to whom the Legislature of this State offer'd the command of its Militia, will go, in 2 or 3 days, to Salisbury, to take that Command—The Governor has ordered 4800 Men into the Field, but, what Number will actually get there, it is impossible, at present to say, However, Men are assembling daily—The Horse are to serve for 2 months the Foot for 3—but, all that Genl. Smallwood can do, for a while, will be, to endeavour to harrass the enemy's Parties, to cut off their Convoys, and perhaps, now & then, break up an outpost. Still, I fear the Militia will get diécouraged, & tired of the business, unless supported by Continental Troops: However, if the Virginians wd. really send on

the Men whom they have promised, & the Continentals were equipped, & marched to the Westward, & the Militia of this State wd. also turn out spiritedly, I hope, by the Exertions of the good People of So. Carolina, Lord Cornwallis' mad Career wd. be soon checked—But alas! when may we really, & reasonably, expect that all these things will come to pass, and, untill they do, what must be the Sufferings of our Friends in that unhappy State—I have seen Colo. Jas. Williams⁷ whose affair with Innis (not killed, as you have heard, but recovering of his wound,) was truly brilliant—He is gone on with a Determination to distinguish himself as a Partisan, & I believe he will—I have put, both him & Sumpter, (each of whom may be of service but they will never agree) under Genl. Smallwood's Command—I wait, with the utmost Impatience, to hear what is intended to be done for our Country, by Genl. Washington, with the aid of our Ally—We have not a Letter from Philada. since Mr. Bee's of the . . . ulto—I request that immediately, after receiving this, you will inform me, of every material transaction to the Northwd. & get the Board of War to send your dispatches, by the line of Expresses which is established from Philada. to Hillsbo.—The Bills are not yet arrived—pray forward 'em, also the Arms, & military Stores, which are much wanted—Under the first Impression of Lord Cornwallis's Letter & Conduct, I had thought of writing to him, & of threatening Retaliation, on the Property of those who are avowedly his Friends: However, I have as yet, declined it, because, he probably wd. disregard a Threat which we cd. not, for the present, execute to any great degree, & because, I hope the Property of his Friends in So. Carolina will, in Time be applied to a better purpose—But, I trust, that Congress will, immediately take Some proper Measure on this point. None occurs to me so proper, as the Burning Towns or Houses in G. Britain—why Dr. Franklin prevented as is said Paul Jones's so doing, I cant. conceive, but, I am sure, nothing wd. so effectually put a stop to the Enemy's cruelties, in this respect, as Retaliation and, Seriously, I wish, & shall expect,—that some thing more than Threats may now take Place—It is Time to convince our Enemies that we dare to retaliate—Armand's Corps,

⁷ Afterwards killed at Kings Mountain. He certainly did not agree with Sumter's *men*, for they refused to serve under him (McCrary *So. Ca. in the Rev.*, 1775–1780, p. 764, Draper's *Kings Mountains and its Heroes*, p. 168.

much reduced, are gone to Warren to recruit—while Washington & Nellson are at Halifax—not above 25 of their Men well enough for duty—150 of the Maryland Troops were retaken by Marion on their way to C. Town, but 70 of 'em went to the Enemy in Town & the rest have never joined the Army—it is supposed they are strolling abt. the Country, or gone Home—The Enemy's principal Posts are at the Waxaws, & to the Westward of the Catawba—they had sent some detachmts. to repossess Ninety-Six and Pedee—their force at Camden not considerable.

I am with great Esteem

Gent. yr. most obedt. Servt.

J. Rutledge

The Delegates of So. Carolina in Congress

Endorsed: Govr. Rutledge Sept. 20th 1780. Hillsborough

Hillsborough Oct^r. 4. 1780.

Gen^t.

Our last Acc^{ts}. from the Westward are, that the Enemy entered Charlotte, in force, this day week—our Troops skirmished with, & killed some of their advanced party, but, finally, retreated to, & are on the East side of the Yadkim, except ab^t. 250 Horse, (Militia) left at Salisbury, to go downwards, & watch the Enemy's Motions—Inclosed is an Ac^t, of the Enemy's Strength, transmitted by Gen^l. Sumner, who collected it from some Pris^{rs}.

Gen^l. Smallwood & Colo. Morgan will march To Morrow, towards Salisbury wth ab^t. 180 Regulars the former to command The Militia—the latter a Corps of rifle-Men, to be picked out of them—not a Virginian is yet arrived here—when Gen^l. Gates will send on, or march with, the rest of the regulars, now here, (many of whom he says are still unequipped,) or, when We shall receive any considerable reinforcements, I know not—the present prospect is truly disagreeable, for every thing goes on slowly—we wait, wth. Impatience. to hear of something important done, or soon intended for us, by the grand Army & our Allies—I wish our Hopes may not be vain.

A. W^m. M^cGraw, from Newbern, informs me, that he read, at that place, a S^o Carolina Gazette of Aug. 20th. w^{ch} mentions that Christ^r. Gadsen, Hugh Rutledge, Ed^{wd}. Blake, & 26 men, whose names he can't recollect, were put on Board a Vessel to be sent to England

—Gen^l. Gates says he has again wrote to Congress, to make Morgan a Brigad^r. Gen^l.⁸—I can see not objection to this Appointment, but, many good Consequences will arise from it—I therefore can^t. avoid Seconding Gen^l. Gates' Application, and requesting, that you will use your best Endeavours to have Morgan, immediately, promoted, to that Rank—

I am Gen^t.

Y^r. Most obed. Serv^t.

J. Rutledge.

P.S. All the Cavalry, who are now on the march from Hallifax, & will be here To Morrow, or next day, fit for Service, do not exceed Ninety—by —— from the Westward, we heard, that on the 1st. Instant, the Enemy were seen on the March, ab^t. 3 miles above Charlotte, wth. 600 Men, & 2 field pieces supp^d. to be Endeav^{rs}. to join Ferguson who was in Burke County, but going down to meet this party, in order to attack our forces to the Westw^d. of Catawba—Colo. Sumpter says Mr. Ferguson & Mr. Edwards are amongst the number of Gent. shipd off & it is said they are sent to S^t. Augustine. Oct^r. 5. 1780—Thursday. A.M.—Pray have Morgan's Promotion dispatched immediately—it will be very injurious to a man of his Experience & Bravery to put him under the Command of the Militia Brigad^{rs}—I desire that you will make a Point of obtaining this Rank for him.

The delegates of S^o. Carolina

Endorsed:

October 4th, 1780.

Addressed: The Delegates of S^o. Carolina

In Congress

Hillsbor^o. Oct. 12th. 1780

Gen^t.

Congress will receive, by this express, an account, just now come to Hand, of Major Fergusons defeat, which I hope will soon be confirmed—The Genl. will, without doubt, inform Congress, of Lord Cornwallis' Strength, & Situation— &, (by what We can discover, from some intercepted Letters,) of his Plan & Dispositions—

⁸ Making Morgan a Brigadier would (and did) give him command over the state officers when thrown with him.

He will also, I presume, send on Copies of those Letters, to have the parts of 'em w^{ch}. are in Cyphers, unriddled—&, I wish they may be decyphered & returned, as soon as possible—but the Genl. is in so great a Hurry, to send on this News, I can add no more, than that we have not recd. a Line from you since yours of the 11th Septr.—w^{ch}. on Consideration I apprehend you will allow is rather inattentive to Us—that Lord Cornwallis is going on with Burning & Hanging—Capt. Conyers assured me Yesterday that 200 Houses have been burn'd—Col. Morgan went from hence last Saturday with ab^t. 180 Regulars & Gen^l. Smallwood went off on Monday wth abt. 90 of the Reg^r. Horse. The rest of the Regulars are now here & when they or any of them will go on I can't say, pretty support this from the Continent—ab^t. 100 Virginians of the 18 Months men arrived here a few days ago quite ragged & unequipped & here they are still—No other force from that Country—In short if any Thing material is done for our poor State in any reasonable Time it will probably be by the despised shabby Militia—I am in Haste Gen^t.

Y^r. most obed^t. serv^t.

J. Rutledge.

The Delegates of So. Carolina.

P.S. I wish you w^d. send on by a safe Hand some more Loan-Office Certificates as soon as possible—Cannot you get the Board of War to send off an Express on a particular day every week & oftener if any thing material sh^d. occur—We w^d. do the same from here for it is really distressing to be with^t. any regular Channel of Intelligence—The Gen^l. complains that he can never hear from Congress & when it is considered that his last Letter from them is upward of a Month ago the Complaint will appear to be well founded—I must repeat my request that you will have this Matter put on a proper Footing—He writes often but no Answer comes.

Endorsed:

Gov^r. Rutledge

Oct^r. 12, 1780 Hillsborough.

In another hand:

Fergusons Defeat—

Complaints of want of support.

Addressed: The Honble. The Delegates of The State of South
Carolina

In Congress

c/o Mr. Baird, at Philadelphia

Salisbury Nov^r. 20. 1780

Gen^t—

My last Letter to you was, from Hillsborough, ab^t. the 13th ulto—Since w^{ch}. Time, I have rec^d. your sev^l. favours by Cap^t. Vanderhorst, & one, of the 14th ult^o., w^{ch} he took from the Express who had it in Charge,—but no others, for, having been down the Country, & Gen^l. Gates expecting I w^d. return to Hillsboro., he left, with the Board of War, all the Letters he had for me—This Circumstance has, I presume, prevented my receiving any, of a subsequent date, from you—I imagine, however, there are several such, at Hillsboro.—I have sent for 'em, and shall answer 'em, when they come to Hand—

I fully intended going back to Hillsboro, but, at Cross Creek, on my Way up. heard such Acco^{ts}. from So. Carolina viz^t; “that Lord Cornwallis was dead—Camden evacuated, & that the *whole* British Army had crossed the Congaree, on their way to Georgia, also that Gates had marched from Hillsborough, the 5th inst., (w^{ch}. he did,) & was proceeding rapidly after them &c”—that I thought it proper to push for our own State as fast as possible—I therefore determined, instead of proceeding to Hillsboro, to cross the Country, by the nearest Route, for this place, which I did, & arrived here, Yesterday—on arriving here, I found that the good News I heard on the Road was entirely false—probably, you will have been amused, with similar acco^{ts}., at Philad^a. I will therefore give you an exact Relation of Matters, as they are at present—The Enemy have a post (strong wth Redoubts) of betwⁿ 5 & 600 Men at Camden where Lord Rawdon commands—another, fortified, of ab^t. 300 at Ninety-Six under Cruger—one at Augusta, abt. the same Number under Brown—& Lord Cornwallis is, with the main Army, ab^t. 1600 Reg^{ts}., at Winnsborough, on Broad River, ab^t. 45 Miles from Congaree, & the same distance from Camden & Ninety-Six—So that he may, pretty readily, reinforce Camden, Ninety Six, or Augusta, or draw his Troops from these posts to his main Body, &, with that, or his whole Army, retreat down, or advance up, the Country, as Circumstances render most eligible—Smallwood & Morgan are at 6 Mile Creek, in this State, ab^t. 16 Miles below

Charlotte (on the Road to Camden) with ab^t. 200 regulars, 1100 militia & 150 Cavalry—Gates is just marching from hence, to join them, wth ab^t. 600 Regulars, & Sumpter lay, a few days ago, between Tyger & Enoree Rivers, wth. (it is said) ab^t. 1000 Militia, but, I believe he has moved more Westwardly, with a View of giving a Blow to a party of the Enemy, in that Direction—Gen^l. Butler is here, with ab^t. 150 Men, guarding Prisoners—Gen^l. Stevens is at Hillsboro., (& ord^d. from thence hither,) wth some Virginia 8 Months Men (Militia who deserted in Gates's action, & who are cond^d. to serve for 8 Months, on that acco^t.) & ab^t 260 Men are, somewhere in Virg^a. on the March from Maryland—Genl. Harrington is stationed at Cheraws, wth ab^t. 250 Men, whose Term of duty is nearly expired—A Col^o. Brown, of this Country, is traveling near him, wth. ab^t. 150 or 200 Men, & Col^o. Marion is moving ab^t. on Pedee & Kingston, with perhaps 300—Thus you see what force, & of what kind, we really have on the Ground, & how it is scattered—However, I hope that, as soon as Gen^l. Green arrives, he will collect 'em, to a good tenable Position, & occasionally detach strong Parties to oppose the Enemy's light Troops who do the most Mischief, to harass the Enemy, circumscribe their Limits, & in Time oblige, 'em to retire to Ch. Town, & give us an opportunity of reestablishing Civil Government, in some part of the Country, of electing, & convening a Legislature, & of making & enforcing Laws—but, this will not be the Work of a day—when, or whether, we shall recover the Town, must depend on Events not to be foreseen, at present—here at least—I wish, however, the Spaniards may really do what they threaten, & that Aid from our Allies was more powerful & successful—the Col^o; & Justices of Surry County took upon 'em to release all the N^o. Carolina Tories taken in Fergusons defeat, on giving Bail to appear at Court—but, I imagine many, if not all of 'em will return to the Enemy—they put the officers on Parol, they have broke it & gone off, probably to the Enemy—& they enlisted the S^o. Carolina Tories taken in that defeat, (116) to serve in the Cont^l. Army, 6 Months—However, 30 of 'em ran away, on the March from the Moravian Towns to this place—the rest (76) were released from their Enlistment, & are here in Goal—this was a strange & unaccountable step of the Col^o. & Magistrates—

A Colo. Cleveland hung 8 or 10 of the most noted horse Thieves

& Tories (of N^o. Carolina,) taken in Fergusons defeat, & Lord Cornwallis has complained to Smallwood of such Cruelty, tho' he & those Acting under him have hanged many more of our People—It is said (& I believe it,) that, of the Prisoners whom Barr took at Augusta, he gave up 4 to the Indians, who killed 'em, cut off their Heads & kicked their Bodies ab^t. the Streets, & that he, (Brown,) hung upwards of 30 Prisoners—his Lordship therefore has mistaken the Side on which the Cruelty lies—Gates has carried the Letter wt^h. him; However, I will send you a copy of it, & of the Answer, wc^h. will be sent to it, when one is sent—I am endeavouring to procure authentick Information, respecting the Hanging, House Burning, Plundering, & other Cruelties, & Acts of Barbarity committed by the British in S^o. Carolina & Georgia, & shall resolve, when I have obtained it, what to do, or write & to whom on those Points—I do not chuse to take up the Matter, with^t. good Authority—From a letter dated the 4th. Inst., wrote by Leslie to C. & found on an Emissary coming this Way from Portsmo. in Virg^a; (of w^{ch}. I presume Gov^r. Jefferson has sent a Copy to Congress) & other circumstances it appears that the plan of those Generals was to have formed a Junction of the Troops under their respective Commands—that they hoped to do so in this State, & expected to have been powerfully aided by the Tories of this Country: However, Fergusons defeat has frustrated that plan, & I hope it will never take Effect—but I think it probable that Lord C. will call for Leslie's Troops, or some other Reinforcement, to the Southward—if so, We shall have more Trouble than we otherwise should—I omitted to mention, that there are some (a few) Regulars still at Hillsboro, who can^t. march, for want of shoes & cloaths—Lord Cornwallis has proposed to exchange the People taken on Kings Mountain, for our Militia, in his hands, but, I think that proposal must not be accepted—Genl. Huger tells me, he wrote you an Acco^t. of Sumpter's successful Resistance of Major Wemys's Attack, and of his having taken that officer—he is a valuable acquisition to us, but, I am sorry to find that he is only slightly wounded, & likely to recover—I wish he may not give Sumpter the slip, for he keeps him with him—I have seen in a Cha^s.Town Gazette, of Oct. 14th a congratulatory Address to Lord Cornwallis on his defeating Gates, & a proclamation of his Lordship for sequestering the Estates of Rebels (in the List of whom I

presume we shall stand,) but, as I suppose Rivington has printed that Address & proclamation I do not send 'em—I shall expect with Impatience, Major Lee's Corps, Genl. Green, & Letters from you, all which, I presume, are on the Way—pray give me every material piece of Intelligence, as expeditiously as possible—I shall set off for Charlotte, in 3 or 4 days, in hopes of an interview with Genl. Sumpter, there, or, at some other convenient place, having sent to him for that purpose.

I am with great Esteem
Gen^t. y^r. most obed. Serv^t.

J: Rutledge.

P.S. Salisbury, Nov. 23^d: 1780

The person by whom this is to go, not having set out, as he promised, I've kept it open to add any Thing which might occur before he went—Col^o. or Major Davy (of which gallant Officer with^t. Doubt you have heard,) is just come up, from Smallwoods Camp—which is still as above mentioned—Col: Davy's Report of the Strength & posts of the Enemy, & of ours, is much the same as above, except that Lord C—has moved somewhat lower down the Country, & so has Sumpter—the latter is below his Lordship, ab^t. S:W. of him—C: is at Shivers Ferry, on the E:Side of Broad River—Sumpter below that Ferry, between Broad & Saluda—his present object is to collect a force, & by going so low down the Country, give those who are desirous, an opportunity, to join him—Davy says Tarlton is in Quest of Marion, & doing much mischief in burning houses on Santee—I wish Lee's Corps were come, but fear they will stop in Virginia—Davy further adds, that the Enemy mount many of their Infantry, in order to proceed rapidly, with their Cavalry, the latter of which consists of, at least, 250 good—I fear the Virginia 18 Months men will not come on, (for Genl. Mulenburgh, who was on the March Southwardly, with 1500, turned back) unless the Enemy sh^d. leave Virginia & I am sorry to find that we must rely so much on our own Efforts. I mean on those of the Carolina's—However I will endeavour to prevail on Col^o. Cleveland, & oth. Mountain Men to assist us for a short Time, with a party of Volunteers (they will not stay long) & I shall, undoubtedly, use every Exertion to prevail with our own People, to act as they ought to do. Inclosed is a Continuation of your Appointment, which I transmit, lest any doubt sh^d.

arise, hereafter, (at the End of 12 Months, from the Time of your Nomination) ab^t. your continuing in the delegation—I intended to have sent it, long ago, but the Matter slipt my *Memory*.

Excuse Haste, for I have not Time to correct, & transcribe this Letter, being obliged to write many dispatches, & transact several Matters, before I set out for Charlotte.

Nov. 25.

Tarleton has late burnt the house w^{ch} was Genl. Richardson's,⁹—turned his wid^w & Family out of Doors & burned them—burned ab^t 30 other Houses on Santee & is gone in pursuit of Sumpter—The Delegates of So. Carolina in Congress

Written on the cover:

If Mr. Baird w^d not proceed & the post w^d. not be going from Baltimore or Lancaster (immediately after his Arrival there,) to Philadelphia he will be pleased to f^wd. this Letter, by Express, (or trusty person,) to the Gentlemen for whom it is directed—The Expense of w^{ch}. they will pay—J;R:

Endorsed:

Gov^r. Rutledge
20–25. Nov^r. 20, 1780, Sailsbury

[Comment written on the cover by Judge Johnson]

A very full state of things in S^o. C^a. at this time, when the army under Gates had returned to Charlotte.

⁹ In the *Life of Greene* by Judge William Johnson, vol. 2, p. 471, Lord Rawdon is charged with this outrage, on the authority of this letter, a manifest error.

(*To be continued*)